

الزَّيْغُ وَالْكَلامُ الْفاسِدُ  
فِي جِدَالِ قَبَّانِي فِي الْمَوَالِدِ

THE  
ERRONEOUS &  
INVALID  
IN MUHAMMAD HISHAM KABBANI'S  
**MAWLID**

BY  
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دار الكتاب والحكمة

للنشر والتوزيع

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## Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, we praise Him, seek His aid, and seek forgiveness from him. Whomever Allah guides, none can misguide him, and whomever Allah leaves to stray, none can guide him to the right way.

I testify that there is no god worthy of worship, and no true Lord except for Allah alone. I also testify that Muḥammad ﷺ is the Last Prophet and Messenger.

The *Mawlid, (Innovation and True Belief: The Celebration of Mawlid According to the Quran and Sunnah and the Scholars of Islam)* by Muḥammad Hishām Kabbāni was made available to me in an early copy printed by his organization some years ago. From that copy I took these quotations for a lecture refuting his claims. Later for a number of reasons (!) my copy of Kabbāni's book was destroyed.

At a later time I decided to prepare the material as a book. So the cassette of the lecture was transcribed, and to be sure the quotes from Kabbāni were precise, I consulted with the same texts available on Kabbāni's internet website. There, the material has been divided into articles with additions and various new titles.<sup>1</sup> I changed the spelling of many of the terms and words he used and I also added most of the texts in Arabic.<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that he has added a large amount of material and quotations in his new writing on

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<sup>1</sup> He also included the material in his book about the Prophet ﷺ.

<sup>2</sup> I retained his statements between quotation marks, with the exception of editing the spelling of some words, and adding (ﷺ) wherever he indicated similarly. Please take note that I did not comment on everything in the quotes, just the main points.

this topic. My objective was primarily to mention only what he called “evidence.” Although I clarified some of the places he misrepresented scholars or deliberately misquoted them, I did not bother to deal with every quote he brings. This is because that would prevent this book from ever being finished, in addition to the fact that we are required to act upon the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, and the understanding of the pious predecessors, not merely quotations of those who came later. It is worthy to mention here that Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه said:

(الْقَصْدُ فِي السُّنَّةِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ اجْتِهَادٍ فِي بَدْعَةٍ)

“Moderation with the Sunnah is better than making an effort with innovation.”<sup>3</sup>

Lastly, the reader must beware that Hishām Kabbāni, has been very active in an anti-Salafi/anti-Wahhabi campaign, and most of what he has used as proofs, and most of the quotations he has mentioned – nearly all of his work – consists of mere translations from a few books and articles that support the *Mawlid*.<sup>4</sup> These Arabic books and articles are famous among the scholars for their erroneous arguments and misquotes. I mean by this that Muḥammad Hishām Kabbāni did not research and come up with all of this, he merely repeated what some people before him have written in Arabic. Had he checked some of his alleged “proofs” with many of the discussions of scholars he quoted in general statements, it would have been easy to find statements of theirs which the reader will see here, and much more, if Allah wills. This is the same with all of his other books, he is often copying misquotations from others, or merely saying the same as others have said, many times he brings so many different sayings to support different points

<sup>3</sup> It was recorded by al-Baghdādī in *Kitāb al-Faqīh wal-Mutafaqīh* (no. 391), al-Lalākā’i in *Uṣūl I’tiqād Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā’ah* (114 and others) and ad-Dārimī (1/72). And as a saying of Ubayy bin Ka‘b by al-Lalākā’i (10) and Ibn al-Mubārak in *az-Zuhd* (2:21-22). Some of its chains are authentic.

<sup>4</sup> Foremost among these, as it appears that the arguments are all taken directly from it, is *Ḥawal al-Iḥtifāl bil-Mawlid an-Nabawi ash-Sharīf* by Muḥammad bin ‘Aluwi bin ‘Abbās al-Māliki al-Ḥāsani.

that some of what he quotes contradicts points he made earlier or in other books! It would be useful if he would at least take the care to properly quote people in the future.

Our goal here is to rectify for the sake of Allah alone, none shares with Him in the right to our work, and to Him is the praise and our gratitude.

## The Precise Date of Birth of the Prophet ﷺ is Not Certain

We know that the exact date of birth of Muḥammad ﷺ is not known for sure.<sup>5</sup>

We also know that the celebration of the *Mawlid* did not begin until after the first three generation of Muslims, about whom the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said in a *ḥadīth* recorded by Muslim (2534) and others:

«خَيْرُ أُمَّتِي الْقَرْنُ الَّذِينَ يَلُونِي. ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ. ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ»

«The best of my *Ummah* is my generation, then the following, and then the following.»

No one in the best three generation celebrated this act.

According to most records, the first to begin the *Mawlid* celebration was the king al-Muẓaffar in Irbil during the sixth or seventh century. As-Suyūṭī mentioned this in *al-Ḥawī* (1:189)

The evolution of the *Mawlid* celebrations has led to the attendees gathering together, with mixing of men and women, reciting poetry, listening to and playing music, narrating about the life of the Prophet ﷺ, calling upon the Prophet ﷺ and others, and believing that the Prophet ﷺ attends the gatherings when greetings are said for him. These, as well as many other deviant activities and the propagation of deviant ideas are the reasons that we say:

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<sup>5</sup>As for the claims to different dates, they are all debated, so none can be agreed to with certainty. The majority of the scholars hold the view that it was on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabi ‘al-Awwal.



## The Sunnah is to Commemorate the Birth of the Prophet ﷺ by Fasting on Mondays

Here it is important to point out the danger of innovation in religion. Especially when it is known that the companions and their followers – who best knew how to live according to the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ – did not practice this celebration. This celebration has led to the abandonment of a Sunnah; that is fasting on Monday. The Prophet ﷺ was asked why he fasted on Monday so much and he ﷺ answered:

«فِيهِ وُلِدْتُ وَفِيهِ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيَّ»

«On it I was born and on it I received the revelation.»

This *ḥadīth* is recorded by Muslim (2703) others.

So he ﷺ fasted on this day, and any custom beyond his tradition and his ﷺ religion will be an addition to his tradition and to his religion.

Yet the “*Mawlid*” has become an ‘*Īd*’ to some, a day of celebration, such that some scholars do not allow fasting on that day! In his preliminary remarks, Kabbāni said:

“In Islam there are two ‘*Īds*’; ‘*Īd al-Adḥā*’ and ‘*Īd al-Fiṭr*’. Other celebrations, like *Mawlid*, are neither obligatory nor forbidden.”

But Ibn ‘Abbād, whom Kabbāni has a quote from in his book, considered it disliked to fast on the *Mawlid*! He explained why:

“As for the *Mawlid*, then what is clear to me is that it is an ‘*Īd*’ among the ‘*Īds*’ of the Muslims and a celebration among their celebrations...”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This quote was taken from his *Rasā'il al-Kubrā* by aṭ-Ṭarāblisi in his *Muwāḥab al-Jalīl Mukhtaṣar Khalīl* (2:406)

All this confusion can be removed by returning to the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ in fasting on Monday, rather than holding a festival on this day, a day that he ﷺ did not celebrate.

There is some more important points to mention here:

## Criticism of a Scholar is Not Condemnation

No matter what scholar in the past says about something – while admitting that it is an innovation; “this is good” it does not necessarily mean that the religious ruling is that it is in fact good, and it only affirms that it is truly an innovation.

As an innovation; it is not something that we can agree is a good thing since the Prophet ﷺ did not teach it to his companions by practicing it.

Then this innovation – even if someone calls it good – will still be considered an innovation. To recognize that fact, as we do about the *Mawlid*, and to say that it is an innovation, does not mean that we are dishonoring a particular scholar who said that it is a “good” innovation. Rather what that means is that we are honoring Muḥammad ﷺ and expressing our love for Allah. This is because Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

﴿Say “If you love Allah then follow me. Allah will love you and forgive your sins.” And Allah is forgiving and merciful.﴾ (Āl ‘Imrān 3:31)

And the “me” here is Muḥammad ﷺ. So here is an *āyah* which is sufficient for this point, because recommending people to follow an innovation is the opposite of “following.”



So the basic point is this, even if you call the innovation “good” it is still opposite to “following,” so you may say it is a “good means” of what is opposite to following, or a “recommended means” that is opposite to following, or a “nice means” that is opposite to following, but it is still opposite to following.

For sake of argument, according to the *āyah*, if you want your sins to be forgiven, if you want Allah to love you, then you follow Muḥammad ﷺ and you do not do what is opposite of what he ﷺ did, even though somebody later says it might be good.

Just because there is a great scholar who says something that contradicts many others scholars’ sayings, it does not mean that this scholar is a bad person, or that we are claiming that he is because we consider him mistaken. No, rather what is being said here is that it is necessary to focus on following Muḥammad ﷺ and that we do so out of love for him more than anyone else. He ﷺ said in the *ḥadīth* reported by al-Bukhārī (15):

«لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ»

**«None of you believes until I am more loved to him than his father, his children and all people.»**

Here the completion of faith is linked to loving the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ more than anyone else.

In the *āyah* above there is a command to the followers of Muḥammad ﷺ. So if you want Allah to love you and forgive your sins, then the means of Allah’s love and the forgiveness of sins is following Muḥammad ﷺ. This is a means of faith, and having faith is only complete through loving the Messenger ﷺ more than any created being besides him.

Now anyone who does something good for *da‘wah*, or, to invite people to Islam, then he may be rewarded by Allah for the good he did. We must

recognize this fact. This is because the mere criticism of a particular topic and those who call to it does not mean we are attacking all of its supporters in particular.

So every soul on the Day of Resurrection will have what it has brought as Allah said in the Qur'ān

﴿فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جُمِعْنَا لَهُمْ لَيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ﴾

﴿How about when We gather them on the Day in which there is no doubt **in** every soul will find what it has wrought, and they will not be wronged.﴾ (Āl 'Imrān 3:25)

I just want to remind everybody of this central point before dealing with the “proofs” and “evidences” that Hishām Kabbāni mentions in his book on the “*Mawlid*”

Then we can mention his “evidences” or “proofs,” if Allah wills.

In his book on the *Mawlid* Muḥammad Hishām Kabbāni has the following heading:

## **“Ten Proofs From the Qur’ān and Sunnah that Celebrating the Prophet’s Birthday is Accepted in *Sharī‘ah*.”**

### **[Number 1]**

Kabbāni says:

“FIRST: Allah asks the Prophet, peace be upon him, to remind his Nation that it is essential for those who claim to love Allah, to love His Prophet:

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

﴿Say “If you love Allah then follow me. Allah will love you and forgive your sins.” And Allah is forgiving and merciful.﴾ (Āl ‘Imrān 3:31)” [End quote]

This was mentioned earlier, and the fact that the *āyah* orders us to follow Muḥammad ﷺ if we love Allah. It is true that following him ﷺ includes loving him, however, the *āyah* merely mentions Allah’s love, and that if we want that, we should follow Muḥammad ﷺ and the *Mawlid* is not something that he ﷺ taught us. Yet, according to the scholars, loving the Messenger ﷺ includes obeying him, and perhaps this is the most important element of that love. Indeed we can express our love for him by following his ﷺ example and fasting on Mondays. So this *āyah* has nothing to do at all with this topic, and calling it a proof for this topic is deceiving.

Kabbāni says:

“The Prophet Emphasized Monday As the Day He Was Born

SECOND: Abu Qatādah al-Anṣārī narrates in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb aṣ-Ṣiyām*, that the Prophet was asked about the fast of Monday, and he answered:

«فِيهِ وَلِدْتُ وَفِيهِ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيَّ»

«On it I was born and on it I received the revelation.» [End quote]

As for this *ḥadīth* as evidence, it proves nothing that Kabbāni wants it to prove. It only says that the Prophet ﷺ fasted on Mondays, and more importantly, why he did so. Kabbāni is not telling us that it is recommended to fast on Mondays, and if he was, we would not have any claim against him. In his comments on the above evidence, Kabbāni said:

“We quote from the book *Kitāb al-Madkhāl* by Ibn al-Ḥajj (1:261): ‘It is an obligation that on every Monday of Rabi‘ ul-Awwal we increase our worship to thank Allah for what He gave us as a great favor...’” [End quote]

In this quote, Ibn al-Ḥajj claims, “It is an obligation that on every Monday of Rabi‘ ul-Awwal we increase our worship to thank Allah for what He gave us as a great favor.”

This is not an endorsed view by the scholars, but nevertheless, since he mentioned it, it also does not support the innovation of celebrating the *Mawlid*, rather; “that we increase our worship to thank Allah for what He gave us as a great favor.” And why is this increase in worship particular to Rabi‘ al-Awwal? Why not fast regularly on Mondays as is the Sunnah of the one we claim to love ﷺ?

After quoting some of the *ḥadīths* that have appeared or will appear,<sup>7</sup> Kabbāni also added:

“This means that the Prophet was expressing his happiness for that day by fasting, which is a kind of worship. Since the Prophet emphasized that day by fasting, worship in any form to emphasize that day is also acceptable. Even if we change the form, the essence is kept.”

This is the statement of a person we hope was not fully cognizant when he said it. The truth is the opposite of what he said, as will become clear without argument, if Allah wills.

### [Number 3]

Kabbāni says:

“THIRD: To express happiness for the Prophet coming to us is an obligation given by Allah through Qur’ān, as Allah said in Qur’ān:

﴿قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا﴾

﴿Of the favor and mercy of Allah let them rejoice.﴾ (Yūnus 10:58)

This order came because joy makes the heart grateful for the mercy of Allah. And what greater mercy did Allah give than the Prophet himself, of whom Allah says,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

﴿We did not send you except as a mercy to human beings.﴾<sup>8</sup> (Al-Anbiyyā’ 21:107)

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<sup>7</sup> Related to fasting on Monday.

<sup>8</sup> “Human beings” is the translation of Kabbāni, one should consult the Noble Qur’an translation for a better explanation of the meaning.

Because the Prophet was sent as a mercy to all mankind, it is incumbent not only upon Muslims, but upon all human beings to rejoice in his person. Unfortunately, today it is some Muslims who are foremost in rejecting Allah's order to rejoice in His Prophet.” [End quote]

The response to this is regarding the *āyah*:

﴿قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا﴾

﴿Of the favor and mercy of Allah let them rejoice.﴾ (Yūnus 10:58)

Kabbāni said, “To express happiness for the Prophet coming to us is an obligation given by Allah through Qur’ān, as Allah said in Qur’ān...”

This is a false claim, for Allah did not order us to express happiness for the Prophet ﷺ in this *āyah*, and this is not the interpretation of the *āyah* that has reached us from the scholars.

In his book *Madārij as-Sālikīn* (3:97) Ibn al-Qayyum commented:

“Ibn ‘Abbās, Qatādah, Mujāhid, al-Ḥasan and others said:

‘And His mercy is the Qur’ān.’”

In his *Tafsīr* of this *āyah*, Ibn Kathīr said it means:

“Rejoice in what has come from Allah. Let them rejoice in the guidance and the religion of truth. It is better than anything they might rejoice in.”

Aṭ-Ṭabari mentioned the same in his comments as those above. In fact, all of the narrations he quoted from the pious predecessors state that this *āyah* refers to Islam and the Qur’ān, the Qur’ān and Islam, or one of the two. None of the narrations mention what Kabbāni has falsely claimed.

As for the second *āyah* he has quoted, it has nothing to do with the interpretation of the one in question.

Now if we were to use the *āyah* he mentioned as an evidence in this matter, and we were to give it the proper interpretation based upon what is reported from the pious predecessors and the Imams of *Tafsīr*, then we would understand that it is ordering us to rejoice in the Qurʾān and Islam. Based upon this we would determine to celebrate the occasion of the beginning of the revelation of the Qurʾān and the religion of Islam. This brings us back to a text mentioned earlier, and helps to demonstrate what happens when people misuse texts in the religion. The Prophet ﷺ was asked why he fasted on Mondays and he ﷺ replied:

«فِيهِ وَلِدْتُ وَفِيهِ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيَّ»

«On it I was born and on it I received the revelation.»

So now we know the answer, we celebrate the revelation of the Qurʾān by fasting. So this is how this *āyah* relates to this topic. It proves that we should rejoice in the revelation of the Qurʾān, and this *ḥadīth* shows one of the ways to do so, by fasting on Mondays.

Then there is the case of *Laylat-ul Qadr*, about which Allah said:

«إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ»

«Indeed We revealed it during *Laylat-ul-Qadr*.» (*Al-Qadr* 97:1)

Most Muslims know what tradition the Prophet ﷺ taught us for that night, and that is the voluntary night prayer.

So up to this point, all of what Kabbāni has claimed is contradicted by the texts that he mentioned. Remember what Kabbāni said:



“This means that the Prophet was expressing his happiness for that day by fasting, which is a kind of worship. Since the Prophet emphasized that day by fasting, worship in any form to emphasize that day is also acceptable. Even if we change the form, the essence is kept.”

According to his claim, whether it is the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ, or the revelation of the Qur’ān, we can rejoice in these matters by any act of worship, because, as he said, “Even if we change the form, the essence is kept.”

So even though the Prophet ﷺ celebrated *Laylat-ul-Qadr* by praying, we may merely feast, mingle between the sexes, call upon the Prophet ﷺ, and recite poems, because “Even if we change the form, the essence is kept.”!!!!!!

And even though the Prophet ﷺ fasted on Mondays out of gratitude to Allah, because it was the day he was born and the day he first received revelation, we may instead hold a feast and recite poems every Monday in commemoration of that, because, “Even if we change the form, the essence is kept.”

This is how Kabbāni uses these texts, and it should be obvious that doing so would replace many acts of the Sunnah with innovation that he prefers, and that his interpretations lead away from the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

#### [Number 4]

Kabbāni says:

“FOURTH: The Prophet always made the connection between religious events and historical events, so that when the time returned for a significant event, he reminded his *Ṣaḥābah* to celebrate that day and to emphasize it, even if it had happened in the distant past. This principle can be found in the following *ḥadīth* of al-Bukhārī and others: ‘When the Prophet reached al-

Madinah, he saw the Jews fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. He asked about that day and they told him that on that day, Allah saved their Prophet, Mūsā and drowned their enemy. Therefore they are fasting on that day to thank Allah for that favor.’ At that time the Prophet responded with the famous *ḥadīth*,

«نَحْنُ أَوْلَى بِمُوسَى مِنْكُمْ»

«We have more right to Mūsā than you»<sup>9</sup>

and he used to fast that day and the day preceding it.” [End quote]

All of what was said earlier is the same here, that is, the Prophet ﷺ fasted on the day in question, and he fasted on Mondays which was the day he was born and it is recommended according to all of the scholars. This has nothing at all to do with the *Mawlid* celebration.

If we use the same principle, that is “The Prophet always made the connection between religious events and historical events, so that when the time returned for a significant event, he reminded his *Ṣaḥābah* to celebrate that day and to emphasize it, even if it had happened in the distant past.” rule

Then what if we apply this principle to Friday, what will happen? In a narration recorded by Muslim (1927) the Prophet ﷺ said:

«خَيْرُ يَوْمٍ طَلَعَتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّمْسُ، يَوْمُ الْجُمُعَةِ. فِيهِ خُلِقَ آدَمُ وَفِيهِ أُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ. وَفِيهِ أُخْرِجَ مِنْهَا. وَلَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ إِلَّا فِي يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ»

«The best day that the sun has risen upon is Friday. On it Ādam was created, on it he entered *Jannah*, and on it he was removed from it, and the Hour will not begin except on a Friday. »

<sup>9</sup> Recorded by Muslim (2609) and others.

So now we know the day Ādam was created, the day he descended to the earth and the day of the Hour. Surely these are historical events that we should consider important.

It is also a special day in relation to an *āyah* of Qur'ān. In a narration recorded by Aḥmad, Ibn 'Abbās said that a Jew said to 'Umar, "O commander of the believers, there is an *āyah* in your Book which if it was revealed to our people we would have taken that day as an 'Īd." 'Umar asked what it was and he replied:

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ﴾

﴿This day I have completed your religion for you...﴾(Al-Mā'idah 5:3)

'Umar replied "Indeed we know on which day it was revealed. It was revealed on two 'Īds, it was revealed on Friday and the day of 'Arafāt."<sup>10</sup>

So this proves that we cannot apply the principle mentioned above. How can we commemorate Friday? Should we fast, as the Prophet ﷺ did in the example Kabbāni gave for this principle, that is the tenth of Muḥarram or the day of 'Āshūrah, or as he ﷺ did on Mondays, and as is encouraged for those who are not performing Ḥajj on the day of 'Arafah. Or, should we celebrate Friday by eating and drinking, or some other special act of worship, like holding a sermon for example?

Yet this shows again why we cannot misuse texts to prove whatever we want. The guidance of the Prophet ﷺ is to celebrate Friday by attending a sermon, and by not fasting, yet in the case of Monday, the day the Qur'ān was first revealed, and his ﷺ birthday, he did fast. The same is the case with the tenth of Muḥarram. So how can anyone say:

"Even if we change the form, the essence is kept."?!

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<sup>10</sup> It is a well known authentic narration, it was also recorded by at-Tirmithi and others, the it was recorded by al-Bukhāri, no 45, without the wording "two 'Īds."

Should we shorten the *zuhr* prayer to two *rak'ahs* on Mondays and hold sermon since:

“Even if we change the form, the essence is kept.”

This is why Allah sent us a Prophet to follow, so we would know how to worship Him and show Him our gratitude, He did not leave us alone to follow such misguided claims as “Even if we change the form, the essence is kept.”

### [Number 5]

“FIFTH: Remembrance of the birth of the Prophet encourages us to pray on the Prophet and to praise him, which is an obligation on us through Allah’s order in the verse,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

﴿Verily, Allah and His angels send *ṣalāh* upon the Prophet; O believers! Send *ṣalāh* on him and send him utmost greetings.﴾ (Al-Aḥzāb 33:56).”  
[End quote]

It is correct that Allah ordered us to say *ṣalāh* upon the Prophet ﷺ, but no one among the pious predecessors interpreted this *āyah* to refer to the *Mawlid*. So it has nothing to do with proving the status of the *Mawlid* at all.

Kabbāni says:

“Expressing happiness and celebrating the Prophet on his birthday causes even unbelievers, by Allah’s favor and mercy, to gain some benefit. This is mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, al-Bukhārī said in his *ḥadīth* that every Monday, Abu Lahab in his grave is released from punishment because he freed his handmaid Thuwaybah when she brought him the news of the Prophet’s birth.”

Al-Bukhārī did not say this in his book. What Muḥammad Hisham Kabbāni is distorting here is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, in the book of Marriage, chapter 201, no. 5101. Imam al-Bukhārī narrates a chain and a *ḥadīth*. After the *ḥadīth* al-Bukhārī says:

“‘Urwah said, ‘Thuwaybah was the freed slave of Abu Lahab, and Abu Lahab freed her to suckle the Prophet ﷺ. When Abu Lahab died some of his family members saw him in a dream in a bad state and asked him, ‘What have you encountered.’ Abu Lahab said, ‘I have not found any rest since I left you, except that I have been given water to drink in this (the space between his thumb and other fingers) and that is because I freed Thuwaybah.’”

1. Al-Bukhārī did not say “Every Monday Abu Lahab in his grave is released from punishment...” As is obvious, this is merely information from one of the narrators in the chain, it is not part of the *ḥadīth*. So Kabbāni has mislead the reader by his statement, “Bukhari said in his *ḥadīth* that every Monday Abu Lahab in his grave is released from punishment.” The truth is, that al-Bukhārī narrated a chain that contains ‘Urwah bin az-Zubayr mentioning a dream that some unnamed person had. So what Kabbāni should have said is “‘Urwah said...”

2. The narration of ‘Urwah is disconnected. ‘Urwah is narrating about Thuwaybah although he is not stating who told him what he is narrating about, and he was not a witness to what he is saying.

3. It says that Abu Lahab freed Thuwaybah before she suckled the Prophet ﷺ. But this contradicts what is recorded in the books of *Sirah* about this particular woman who suckled the Prophet ﷺ. Ibn Hajar said:

“What is in the *Sirah* contradicts that, and that is that Abu Lahab freed her before the *Hijrah* and a long time after she suckled him...”<sup>11</sup>

4. It implies that the punishment of Abu Lahab was lightened. Ibn Hajar also said:

“In the *hadith* is proof that the disbeliever will benefit from his righteous deeds in the Hereafter. But this contradicts the Qur’ān. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَدْ مَنَّآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنْثُورًا﴾

﴿And We shall turn to whatever deeds they did, and We shall make them scattered particles.﴾ (Al-Furqān 25:23)

And the first response to this is that the report is a *mursal*<sup>12</sup> narration from ‘Urwah who did not mention whom he narrated it from. And from the view that if it was connected, then what is in the narration is a dream during sleep so there is no proof in it.”<sup>13</sup>

5. As mentioned in the previous point, the text is about a dream, and dreams are not a proof in our religion.

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<sup>11</sup> *Fath al-Bāri* no. 5101.

<sup>12</sup> Normally referring to a narration missing a Companion, here, as is obvious, it is applied because the link above the narrator is missing.

<sup>13</sup> See previous reference.

Kabbāni says:

“We are asked to know about our Prophet, about his life, about his miracles, about his birth, about his manners, about his faith, about his signs (*āyāt wa dalā’il*), about his seclusions, about his worship, and is not this knowledge an obligation for every Muslim? What is better than celebrating and remembering his birth, which represents the essence of his life, in order to acquire knowledge of his life? To remember his birth begins to remind us of everything else about him. This will make Allah happy with us because then we will be able to know the Prophet’s *Sirah* better, and we will be readier to take the Prophet as an example for ourselves, to correct ourselves, and to imitate him. That is why the celebration of his birthday is a great favor sent to us.” [End quote]

The response to this is the same as what has been mentioned before. We celebrate the revelation of the Qur’ān during Ramaḍān by fasting and voluntary prayer during the night, and we commemorate the birth of the Prophet ﷺ by fasting on Mondays. Allah has ordered us to believe in all of the Prophets but no one is claiming that we should remember them by celebrating their birthdays on an annual basis! Instead of this, Allah ﷻ revealed their stories in the Qur’ān, which we are rewarded for reading. Similarly, we learn about the Prophet ﷺ by reading the authentic *ḥadīths* that tell us about his life. No one is arguing against fasting or praying, or reading the Qur’ān or authentic *ḥadīths*.

The most important knowledge for the servant of Allah is to know Allah. And the most important way one can do that is by the Qur’ān. Thus, we celebrate the revelation of the Qur’ān by fasting, both during Ramaḍān – along with the voluntary night prayer – and on Mondays. This does not give us the freedom to innovate by encouraging people to spend Monday nights during Ramaḍān, or, *Laylat-ul-Qadr*, reading and singing poems, and participating in the other innovations that occur during the *Mawlid* festivals.



Kabbāni says:

“EIGHTH: In the time of the Prophet, it is well-known that poets came to him with all kinds of works praising him, writing about his campaigns and battles and about the *Ṣaḥābah*. This is proved by the numerous poems quoted in the *Sīrahs* of Ibn Hishām, al-Wāqidi, and others. The Prophet was happy with good poetry since it is reported in Bukhārī’s *al-Adab al-Mufrad*<sup>14</sup> and elsewhere that he said:

«إِنَّ مِنَ الشَّعْرِ حِكْمَةً»

«There is wisdom in poetry.»” [End quote]

In fact, Allah has praised him the Qur’ān! The issue of reciting poetry, and in particular, poetry for the Prophet ﷺ has nothing to do with whether or not the *Mawlid* celebration is an innovation.

## [Number 9]

Kabbāni says:

“NINTH: The Prophet emphasized in his *ḥadīth* both the day and the place of birth of previous prophets. Speaking of the greatness of the day of *Jum‘ah* (Friday), the Prophet said in his *ḥadīth*: “On it [i.e. *Jum‘ah*], Allah created Ādam.”<sup>15</sup> This means that the day of Friday is emphasized because Allah created Ādam on that day. That day is emphasized because it saw the

<sup>14</sup> The reference is correct (no. 858), but one wonders why he didn’t give the reference of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* no. 6145? As for Kabbāni’s translation of it “There is wisdom in poetry,” Ibn Hajar said: “So the meaning is: ‘Indeed among poetry there are beneficial statements which prevent one from foolishness.’” (*Fatḥ Al-Bārī* no. 6145). Dr. Muḥsin Khan’s translation is closer to what is correct: “Some poetry contains wisdom.”

<sup>15</sup> A reference was given for this earlier.

creation of the prophet and father of all human beings. What about the day when the greatest of prophets and best of human beings was created? The Prophet said:

«إِنِّي مَكْتُوبٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَاتِمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَإِنَّ آدَمَ بَيْنَ الْمَاءِ وَالطِّينِ»

«Truly Allah made me the Seal of prophets while Ādam was between water and clay.»<sup>16</sup>

This *ḥadīth* is related by Aḥmad in the *Musnad*, al-Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah* and others, and is sound and established as authentic.” [End quote]

This issue of Friday was addressed earlier, and although Allah had decreed that Muḥammad was the Last of the Prophets before he ﷺ was created, he ﷺ was born on a Monday as mentioned earlier. The issue of the *Mawlid* is about whether we should commemorate his birthday as he ﷺ did, or as some other people do. It is not about recognizing important events and places! So we commemorate his birthday as he did, by fasting on Mondays, and we recognize the importance of Fridays also, by following his guidance, and not fasting. All of this is in accordance with his ﷺ guidance, not our own.

Kabbāni also added:

“The Prophet Emphasized the Birthplace of Prophets: A *ḥadīth* authenticated by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Haythami in *Majma' az-Zawā'id* states that on the night of *Isrā'* and *Mi'rāj*, the Prophet was ordered by Jibrīl to pray two *rak'ahs* in Bayt al-Laḥm (Bethlehem), and Jibrīl asked him: “Do you know where you prayed?” When the Prophet asked him where, he told him: “You prayed where 'Īsā was born.” [End quote]

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<sup>16</sup> Shaykh Al-Albānī has graded a narration with this meaning *ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (no. 4581)

This *ḥadīth* is reported from Shaddād bin Aws. As for al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Haythami in *Majma' az-Zawā'id* (no. 237 Vol 1, pp 73-74), Kabbāni has distorted his grade, for he did not authenticate it! After stating that it was recorded by al-Bazzār and at-Ṭabarāni in *al-Kabīr*, and mentioning some alternative wording, al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Haythami said, "It contains Ishāq bin Ibrāhīm bin al-'Alā', he was graded trustworthy by Yaḥyā bin Ma'in, and an-Nasā'i graded him **weak**."<sup>17</sup>

Ibn Kathīr mentioned this version of the *ḥadīth* in his *Tafsīr* of *Sūrat al-Isrā'* and he said, "There is no doubt that this *ḥadīth* includes things that are *ṣaḥīḥ* as mentioned by al-Bayhaqi, and also things that are rejected, like the prayer in Bayt al-Laḥm..."

It is also reported from Anas رضي الله عنه. Ibn Kathīr commented on it, "It contains oddities and severely rejected matters." In *Fuṣūl fī Ikhtisār Sirah ar-Rasūl* he said about it, "It is odd and severely rejected, and its chain is mediocre, but what is in the authentic *ḥadīths* proves its objectionable status. And Allah knows best."<sup>18</sup>

As for its chain and its mediocre appearance, it is recorded by an-Nasā'i in his *Sunan* (449) with a chain from Sa'id bin 'Abdul-'Azīz [at-Tanūkhī], who

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<sup>17</sup> But that is not all about this Ishāq. He was from Homs, and the famous Muḥaddith from Homs, Muḥammad bin 'Awf at-Ṭā'i declared him a liar. Abu Dāwūd said, "He is nothing." In *at-Taqrīb*, Ibn Ḥajar said, "Truthful with many blunders, and Muḥammad bin 'Awf was adamant that he is a liar." In *at-Talkhīṣ*, ath-Thahabi said, "Feeble." So Ishāq's narrations are weak, unless you consider what Yaḥyā bin Ma'in said above. But that is not the final word from Yaḥyā bin Ma'in and it was rejected. So he said, 'It is not like that.' So a man in the circle said to him, 'O Abu Zakariyyā: Ibn 'Awf said as we have said!' So he replied, 'If Ibn 'Awf said it, then Ibn 'Awf is more knowledgeable of the narrations from his land.'" And this Ibn 'Awf is Muḥammad bin 'Awf who said that Ishāq was a liar and Ishāq was from the land of Muḥammad bin 'Awf. So accordingly Ishāq's narrations are weak! As for Ibn Ḥajar saying that he is truthful, then that must also be weighed against what Muḥammad bin 'Awf said, since he is more knowledgeable about the narrations from his land!

<sup>18</sup> Shaykh al-Albāni called it "*munkar*" (rejected) in *Da'if Sunan an-Nasā'i* no. 449.

said, “Yazīd bin Abu Mālīk narrated to us, he said, ‘Anas bin Mālīk narrated to us...’” And he mentioned it. But this narration has a deficiency in it. In *Jāmi‘ at-Taḥṣīl*, under Yazīd bin ‘Abdur-Raḥmān Abu Mālīk; al-‘Alā‘i, mentioned this *ḥadīth* and that Abu Mushir (*pronounced Mus-hir*) said that Yazīd committed *tadlīs*<sup>19</sup> in it, and that the correct narration from Yazīd is; “from some of the companions of Anas.” It is also recorded by Ibn ‘Asākir in *Tārīkh Dimashq* (65:281 no. 8306) with two chains, the first similar to that of an-Nasā‘i, and the second: “from some of his companions from Anas...” and he clarifies that this is the correct version, and he mentioned that Abu Zur‘ah said, “As for the *Mi‘rāj ḥadīth*, Yazīd did not hear it from Anas.”

Therefore, with this *tadlīs*, it is *mursal* from Yazīd, according to four of the Hufāẓ, and it is not worthy of being a witness.

It is also reported from Abu Hurayrah. Under the biography of Bakr bin Ziyād al-Bāhili in his *Majruḥīn*, Ibn Ḥibbān mentioned this *ḥadīth*. He commented on this narrator, “Shaykh *ad-dajjāl* who fabricates *ḥadīths* attributing them to the trustworthy, it is not permissible to write from him except as a means of censure.” He commented on the *ḥadīth*, “This thing, there is no doubt according to the average people of *ḥadīth* that it is fabricated.”

Ibn al-Jawzi included it among the fabricated narrations in his book *al-Mawḍu‘āt* and he quoted some of what Ibn Ḥibbān said above.

In *Shifā‘ as-Suqām*, as-Subki mentioned Ibn Taymiyyah’s saying about it, “It is a lie, there is no truth in it.” Then as-Subki endorsed his statement and said, “He is right in what he said...”

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<sup>19</sup> Usually used to describe a narration where the narrator conceals the identity of the person he is narrating from in some way, or when he says “from” someone when he did not actually hear it from him. In rarer cases, as in this case, it is stated in a way that appears as if he actually heard it.

Under the biography of the narrator Bakr bin Ziyād in *Mizān al-I‘tidāl* ath-Thahabi quoted what Ibn Hibbān said about him and the narration.

In *Fuṣūl fī Ikhtiṣār Sirah ar-Rasūl*, Ibn Kathīr said, “It is also not confirmed because of the circumstances of Bakr bin Ziyād as mentioned.”

In *al-Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah fī Aḥādīth al-Mawḍu'ah*, ash-Shawkānī listed this as a fabricated *ḥadīth* and quoted some of what Ibn Hibbān said about it.

Since the mention of the prayer at Bayt al-Laḥm is not found in an authentic *ḥadīth* according to most of the Ḥufāẓ, there is no need to mention it, or what it contains that contradicts the authentic *ḥadīths*. It certainly cannot be used as Kabbānī has used it, since what he is using it to prove is the very same objectionable topic that the scholars have rejected in it!

### [Number 10]

Kabbānī says:

“The *Ijma'* of ‘*Ulama*’ on the Permissibility of *Mawlid*

TENTH: Remembering the Prophet’s birthday is an act that all ‘*Ulama*’ of the Muslim world accept and still accept. This means that Allah accepts it, according to the saying of Ibn Mas‘ūd related in Imam Aḥmad’s *Musnad* with a sound chain: ‘Whatever the majority of Muslims see as right, then this is good to Allah, and whatever is seen by the majority of Muslims as wrong, it is wrong to Allah.’”<sup>20</sup>

The claim that all of the scholars of the past and present have agreed that the *Mawlid* is allowed is false. Similarly, the claim that the majority of the scholars of the past as well as the present have agreed to it is also false. It

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<sup>20</sup> Recorded by Aḥmad (1:379) al-Bazzār (130) and others, and although that chain actually contains a deficiency, the text is considered authentic due to some other supporting narrations.

was not agreed to by the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, nor those who followed them, nor those who followed them. It was not the view of any of the four Imams, may Allah have mercy upon them, during the generations after them, it was not agreed to by any consensus of the scholars. This claim is merely a deceitful lie. In fact, some scholars have stated the exact opposite, even some who Kabbāni likes to quote! Ash-Shawkāni said about the *Mawlid*: “And there is *ijma'* among the Muslims that it is an innovation.”<sup>21</sup>

## **An Additional Selection of Kabbāni's False and Misleading Claims**

Kabbāni says:

“Ibn Taymiyyah's Opinion on the Celebration of *Mawlid* and the Deviation of 'Salafis' from his Opinion

This is Ibn Taymiyyah's opinion about *Mawlid* from the Collected *Fatwās*, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā Ibn Taymiyyah*, Vol. 23, p. 163 and his *Iqtidā' aṣ-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*, p. 294-295, Section entitled: “The innovated festivities of time and place”

‘And similarly what some people innovate by analogy with the Christians who celebrate the birth of ‘Īsā, or out of love for the Prophet and to exalt him, and Allah may reward them for this love and effort, not on the fact that it is an innovation... To celebrate and to honor the birth of the Prophet and to take it as an honored season, as some of the people are doing, is good and in it there is a great reward, because of their good intentions in honoring the Prophet.’” [End quote]

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<sup>21</sup> *Fatḥ ar-Rabbāni*, collection 83, which is about the *Mawlid*, and more of it appears near the end of this book.

I say: These are two separate quotes attached together. Here is what Ibn Taymiyyah actually said in the first quote along with a better translation of it:

(وكذلك ما يحدثه بعض الناس إما مضاهاة للنصارى في ميلاد عيسى عليه السلام وإما محبة للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وتعظيما له و الله قد يشيهم على هذه المحبة والاجتهاد لا على البدع)

“And like that, what some people have innovated, be it out of analogy to the Christians in the birthday of ‘Īsā or be it out of love for the Prophet and honor for him and Allah, they may be rewarded for this love and *ijtihād*, **not for the innovation.**”

So it is clear that Ibn Taymiyyah called it an innovation. As for the second quote it is more lengthy:

(فتعظيم المولد واتخاذ مرسما قد يفعله بعض الناس وتكون له فيه أجر عظيم لحسن قصده وتعظيمه لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كما قدمته لك أنه يحسن من بعض الناس ما يستقبح من المؤمن المسدد ولهذا قيل للإمام أحمد عن بعض الأمراء إنه أنفق على مصحف ألف دينار ونحو ذلك فقال دعه فهذا افضل ما أنفق فيه الذهب أو كما قال مع أن مذهبه أن زخرفة المصاحف مكروهة وقد تأول بعض الأصحاب أنه أنفقها في تجديد الورق والخط وليس مقصود أحمد هذا وإنما قصده أن هذا العمل فيه مصلحة وفيه أيضا منفعة كره لأجلها)

“So by honoring the *Mawlid* and taking it as a festival as some people do, one may get a great reward for the good intention and for honoring the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as explained to you, that to some people what is disgraceful to the firm believer may be good. And for this reason when they told Imam Aḥmad about a prince who spent one thousand or more *dīnārs* on



a *muṣḥaf* he said, ‘Leave him, for this is the best that gold can be spent on.’ Or something similar, although according to his *mathhab* decorating the *muṣḥafs* is disliked. Some of his followers interpreted that saying that it was only spent to renovate the pages and script. But this was not the intent of Aḥmad, his intent was only that this deed contains a benefit, **although it also contains a harm for which it is rebuked.**”

This last sentence explains the beginning of the paragraph, and it is necessary in order to understand Ibn Taymiyyah’s point.

Kabbāni further states:

“We ask: Was Ibn Taymiyyah promoting an innovation when he permitted the celebration of *Mawlid* ‘as some of the people are doing’? Not only did he allow it, but he mentioned that their celebration of *Mawlid* ‘is good and in it there is a great reward.’”

Kabbāni’s claim is obviously a distortion of what Ibn Taymiyyah actually said. This is because Ibn Taymiyyah has made it clear that some people may be rewarded for a disgraceful act even though it is obviously disgraceful to a true believer. And this reward they may get, for their good intention, although they would not get a reward for their innovation.

So how is it that Kabbāni can claim that we have deviated from Ibn Taymiyyah’s opinion, while Ibn Taymiyyah said that it is an innovation that they will not be rewarded for, as we do?

Kabbāni also said:

“Ibn Taymiyyah’s Opinion on the Meetings of *Thikr*

The following is the opinion of Ibn Taymiyyah on meetings of *thikr*. It can be found in the King Khālīd bin ‘Abdul-‘Azīz edition of *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā Ibn Taymiyyah*:

Ibn Taymiyyah was asked about people that gather in a *masjid* making *thikr* and reading Qur’ān, praying to Allah and taking their turbans off their heads (leaving their heads bare) and crying, while their intention is not pride nor showing off but seeking to draw closer to Allah: is it acceptable or not? He answered: ‘Praise to Allah, it is good and recommended according to *Sharī‘ah* (*mustahāb*) to come together for reading Qur’ān, making *thikr*, and making *dū‘ā*.’”

Now, this is what Ibn Taymiyyah actually said (*Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā* 22:523) when questioned about such gatherings:

(الحمد لله، الاجتماع على القراءة والذكر والدعاء حسن مستحب إذا لم يتخذ ذلك عادة راتبة — كالاتتماعات المشروعة — ولا اقترن به بدعة منكروة، وأما كشف الرأس مع ذلك فمكروه، لاسيما إذا اتخذ بكون منكراً ولا يجوز التعبد بذلك، والله أعلم)

“All praise is due to Allah. Gathering for the recitation of Qur’ān, and *thikr*, and supplications is and good and recommended, **as long as that is not taken as a regular practice like the legislated congregations, and it is not accompanied by evil innovation. As for exposing the head and other than that, it is *makrūh* (disliked) especially when that is done as worship, in which case it would be an evil, and is not allowed to worship by such means. And Allah knows best.**”

So compare this to what Kabbāni said, “The following is the opinion of Ibn Taymiyyah on meetings of *thikr*.”

What do you think Kabbāni means by “meetings”? And what is Ibn Taymiyyah’s opinion about these “meetings”? It is obvious that his opinion is that such gatherings are good as long as they are not practiced as regularly scheduled “meetings”!!!

Kabbāni also said:

“Imam ash-Shawkāni in his book *al-Badr at-Ṭālī*’, said, ‘It is permissible to celebrate the Prophet’s birthday.’” [End quote]

Actually, ash-Shawkāni has said, “I have not found an evidence to support it. And the first who instituted it was the Sultān al-Muẓaffar, Abu Sa’id, in the seventh century. **And there is *ijma’* among the Muslims that it is an innovation.**”<sup>22</sup>

As for the quote from *al-Badr at-Ṭālī*’, Kabbāni did not give us a reference to check, and the title is a collection of biographies about later scholars, which is organized according to their names. So without Kabbāni telling us whose biography it was mentioned under, then we cannot easily check it.

Most probably it is a quote from one of those whose biographies are contained in the book, not actually ash-Shawkāni’s words.

## Conclusion

Kabbāni’s proofs all merely prove his ignorance. It is not fair to confuse Muslims by quoting half of what someone said about a particular topic, as it is clear that he has done. In fact, these are not all of the misquotes he presents. If one were to make the observation, “We do not claim that these are direct proofs for the *Mawlid* festival, but that they indicate that it is allowed, and that a number of scholars allow it as well.” Then the response to this is that the Sunnah is to recognize the birth of the Prophet ﷺ by fasting on Mondays, as mentioned many times before, and no matter how much we love the scholars and hold them in esteem, we will not replace the Sunnah of

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<sup>22</sup> *Fath ar-Rabbāni*, collection 83, which is about the *Mawlid*.

the Prophet ﷺ with an innovation, even though someone we love likes it, no matter who it is:

«وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ»

«his father, his children and all people.»

as the Prophet ﷺ said.

All praise is due to Allah who guided us by sending His Last Prophet and Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ.